



Southeast Fishery Bulletin

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RED SNAPPER COMMERCIAL FISHERY IN GULF OF MEXICO FEDERAL WATERS WILL OPEN AT NOON, AUGUST 1, 2002, AND CLOSE AT NOON, AUGUST 7, 2002

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries) announces that the commercial fishery for red snapper in Gulf of Mexico Federal waters will open at noon, local time, on August 1, 2002, and close at noon, local time, on August 7, 2002. The 2002 Gulf of Mexico commercial red snapper quota is 4.65-million pounds. The commercial fishing season is divided into spring and fall seasons. The spring season began at noon, local time, on February 1, with 3.10 million pounds available, and the fall season begins at noon, local time, on October 1, with the remainder of the annual quota available. During the spring and fall seasons fishing will be allowed during the first 10 days of each month until the quota is caught. Preliminary landings for February 1-10, 2002 (649,494 pounds), March 1-10, 2002 (528,516 pounds), April 1-10, 2002 (540,728 pounds), May 1-10, 2002 (525,358 pounds), June 1-10, 2002 (489,054 pounds), and July 1-7, 2002 (92,062 pounds) totaled 2,825,212 pounds of red snapper landed. Therefore, a total of 274,788 pounds remain in the spring quota.

NOAA Fisheries had previously announced the closure of the commercial red snapper fishery as of noon July 7, 2002, until noon October 1, 2002, based on the projection that the spring quota would be reached as of July 7, 2002.

However, due to severe weather in the western Gulf of Mexico and the 4th of July holiday, the quota was not reached. Therefore, the fishery will reopen at noon, local time, August 1, 2002, and close at noon, local time, August 7, 2002. The commercial fishery will remain closed until noon October 1, 2002.

The operator of a vessel with a valid reef fish permit and a Class 1 or Class 2 red snapper license having red snapper aboard must have landed and sold such red snapper before noon, local time, on August 7, 2002. The minimum size limit for the commercial fishery is 15 inches total length.

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NOAA Fisheries is an agency of the Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.